LITTLE BLUE BOOK NO. 661
Edited by E. Haldeman-Julius

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Some Aspects of Our National Character

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NEUROTIC AMERICA AND THE SEX IMPULSE

I sometimes think that a calm and exhaustive study of the American temperament in relation to sex and its various manifestations would result in the scientific conclusion that this country, taken as a whole, is as much a victim of a deep-seated neurosis relating to this impulse as any, the most morbid of those who appeal to psycho-analysis for treatment. The profound and even convulsive interest in any case involving a sex crime or delusion (Thaw, Leo Frank, Billy Brown, Carlisle Harris, Nan Patterson, Durant; or any negro rape case in the South); the ridiculous and quite neurotic interest displayed by grown men and women, to say nothing of children, in the exploits of so-called "cuties"—the "Spring Blossoms," "June Elfs," "Violet Dawns" of the movies—the perennial and astonishingly profitable (in so far as a certain class of theatrical management is concerned) interest of the male and even female American in the utterly mechanical and standardized beauty chorus shows with their (presumably) seventeen-vear-old maids in bathing, bedroom-bath and other forms of abbreviated attire! Are not these points in evidence? In the matter of the latter, no story is necessary; just erotic color, music, dancing evolutions and double-meant (I almost said "mint") jokes, and the thing is done.

Again, look at any American city where morality or religion, or both, presumably have full sway (and in what American city are they not supposed to be dominant?), and what do you find? The most desirable locations in the best portions of the city, outside of the trade centers, given over to the leading churches and

the newspapers, which preach a lofty code of ethics and morals which they themselves find difficult if not impossible to practice; while elsewhere the local bookstores and picture shops and biil-boards are crowded with a class of literature and illustration, or so-called "art," which to read or view, according to the adjacent churches and newspapers, would result in the loss of your immortal soul as well as your local standing. And yet these same are displayed, sold and read plentifully and with avidity, for the very good reason, no doubt, that they satisfy a craving and a thirst not otherwise open to satiation. In any town of any size, what pictures are not displayed and sold: "September Morn," "Youth," "Purity," "Innocence," "Yes," "Waiting," and the like, disguised as little as the law will permit. Again, where will you not find a swarm of sex magazines labeled "breezy," "snappy" and the like, the kind that any sex-suppressed neurotic might well crave, and all received with the profoundest gratitude and widest distribution? Where in America, any more than abroad (barring countries of Asia, Africa and the South Pacific, where sex-suppression is not the order of the day) does one lack for pornographic nudes or privately circulated writings of the most lurid character? Are the art or book or drug stores of the small towns free of them? Is it not true that you can still buy almost everywhere, "Three Weeks," "Life's Shop Window," "The Yoke," and other such classics, whereas those admirable volumes of life and satire "The Decameron," "Droll Stories," "The Confessions," Cellini, are only to be discovered, and that by chance and peradventure and "against the law," on the dark and musty shelves of some out-of-the-way old book store,

and these consumed by the intelligensia and the sex-satisfied only, and with an upward mouth-curl of amusement at the innate humors of passion? The hobble-skirt, the tango dance, the Hula-Hula or Hawaiian melodies—what did each in its day indicate? Plays like "Everywoman," "Experience," "The Girl from Rector's," "Parlor, Bedroom and Bath"—what did they suggest?

Not so very long since, I stopped for a little while in a town of a hundred thousand population in the South. It was moral, religious, conventional—in other words, American. It might as well, however, have been in New England, the Northwest, the Southwest, the Middle West, for any difference to be discovered in its moral texture. In this home of chivalry,. courtesy, purity and the like, erected originally on the backs of driven slaves, a number of its most interesting points of vantage were as usual occupied by the churches, as impressive and prosperous as those anywhere. It had only one theater of consequence, and that open only two nights a week, if so often. Its poorer classes were entertained by three or four moving-picture establishments ("Passed by the National Board of Censors"); but the well-to-do also attended these, for they had no other place to go for amusement. Yet, in the face of the highly censored "movies," theater and bookstores and the absence of houses of ill-repute (all suppressed), there were two or three "first-class" hotels, all with their Thés Dansantes, cabaret suppers and the like, of the character of which I propose to speak later. The most exclusive bookstore was so very moral that it would not carry any books not approved by the "Watch and Ward" and "Library Protection" association, nor would the

vine-covered library in the best section, although at any time you might have gone to the principal dry-goods store and by a roundabout process secured nearly all that you desired.

While I was in this city a twelve-year-old boy was arrested at one of the railroad stations about two hundred yards from the principal beach for appearing in a two-piece bathing suit. It was not asserted in the prosecution which followed (which was vigorously defended by his father) that a twelve-year-old boy in a two-piece bathing suit was immoral, but a man in a one-piece one or a girl in any kind at all would be, and to avoid the possible vitiation of public purity which might thus follow the boy was arrested. He was discharged with a warning—but even so. You can see how high the virtue at this city should be.

Yet, at the same time, in this same city, were the three aforementioned hotels with their Thés Dansantes, roof gardens, cabaret grills, this, that and the other, and in these might have been seen, any late afternoon or evening, winter and summer, such a collection of sex-struck infants and elders as would be worth the same price of admission anywhere. The clothes! The wondrous shoes and gaudy purses, the subdued and yet moving and suggestive combination of colors! The efforts to flagellate the already too harried imagination with a promise of delights which the local morality squad, I fear, would never permit to be realized. You could pay as much in either of these places for a pot of tea and three little thin slices of toast as you could anywhere in the world. In their efforts to provide you with a superior (sex) atmosphere they made it possible for you so to do.

Wrong? Not a bit. I am not describing it

for that purpose; nor am I quarreling with human nature for expressing its inmost desires, being what it is: avid, alluring, secret, hungry. I am smiling at the anachronistic spirit of the same community which would arrest the boy in the bathing suit, prohibit "near beer," snip every even weakly suggestive passage out of a "movie," "run" any indecent play ("Hedda Gabler," let us say, or "The Wild Duck," since it could not understand them) out of town. No copies of "The Song of Songs," Rousseau's "Confessions," "The Decameron," or the unexpurgated "Arabian Nights." Never, never, never! Yet look at these same hotels, these girls and youths clinging to each other in the suggestive dances! The movements, the sinuous, almost savage, abandon, the love-looks, the whispers; And the automobiles lined up along distant country roadsides in the dark later—although not a single house of assignation or prostitution was tolerated within the city limits. One had to secure a Ford and employ the open woods and fields instead. And in the basement next to the barbershop in each hotel was one or more "manicure booths," curtained confessionals or recessionals, into which one might retire with a manicure maid to have one's fingers done. Owing to the dashing quality of these maids the business was large.

For myself, I do not know what the psychic or spiritual or creative significance of these impulses of the sexes may be, unless, in truth, within equational limits they are moral or at least essential, and so to be cherished as a good instead of an evil; but one thing is certain: their appearance in this florid public form and in the center of a vice-cured city would indicate that either the attitude of the nation

is wrong or that we have in our midst a host of neurotic or sex-struck degenerates who ought to be eliminated from the body civic in a very radical manner. But are they neurotic? Or is it the nation that is wrong, and these but the neurotic symptoms of its error? Certainly, nowhere outside of America and especially in such a vice-taboo realm as this, I fancy, are the terrors of sex excess, the degradation and disease following sex libertinage, more enthusiastically or more glowingly pointed out as the psychic or spiritual aftermath or heavenly punishment of these "sins"; and, yet, for all the length of time these horrors have been "known" or insisted upon or pointed out, and regardless of whether they are really true or not, is there any marked diminution of the so-called sex evil in America? Has the denying of drink or prophylactics to the American sailor or soldier cured him of his interest in sex? Will it? The world apparently, or that part of it expressed by, in or through the sexes, is as avid and seeking as ever. We know, or some of us do, that the chemistry by which we and the sex impulse are compounded is above the knowledge or volition of man, although its object in so far as human moods and passions are concerned, is plain enough. But in America we are not willing, if we do know, to admit it. Our increasing numerical presence here should be evidence enough of its force, but we waive that in favor of our theories in regard to the inherently moral and Christian home—even the complete suppression of sex! That a balance or equation between excess and license and inane, mollusc-like passivism in regard to sex and its expression is all that is ever struck in Nature, is plain enough to those who think; but that an American in authority in state or

church should admit it! Life, apparently, is never exact in anything, and the desirability of having it so is of course open to question. But still——

Yet, to me, the impulses we are trying to suppress are, this side of excess, perfectly normal, while the thing we think we want is an infantile conception of life and its processes, unsuited to thinking men and women. Our conviction is apparently that sexuality is essentially wrong and debasing, and yet we do not really think so, as our intense national interest in every phase of sex proves. We are afraid to face ourselves honestly and openly in anything, neurotically so, and that is what makes the American intellect so utterly contemptible and negligible at times. What is nearer the truth is that our attitude is to be psychoanalytically traced in various ways to the strangely exaggerated (neurotic, I think) conceptions of the part sex or its over-emphasis plays in life due to repression, which have followed upon impossible religious theories brought from abroad (Quaker, Methodist, Puritan, Mennonite, Catholic), and our reaction to them. These have developed that repressive social and biologic ignorance regarding sex characteristic of so many American families, offspring of these sects even when they are no longer of them. The conviction that sex is debasing, dominant at least at this time in nearly every American mind, I believe, is to be traced so often to these earlier experiences, particularly with regard to parents and their views. The average American child—and I suppose England is not much better, judging by their novels and morals—is permitted to base its ideals of life and social relations, especially sex relations, on this earlier pretense on the part of

parents that sex does not exist—for them at least.

So it is that we find adult boys and girls pretending, even to themselves, that they do not know what sex is and the manner in which children come into existence, and preachers and pretending thinkers speaking and writing as though sex were not an all but dominant force in life. And instead of viewing this inconceivably dull attitude as something that needs modification and bringing ourselves to the realization that there is nothing inherently disgraceful about having sexual desire, or at least knowledge of it, and of eventually gratifying it, we allow ourselves to be kept in tow of crackbrained religionists and ethic mongers who insist on painting our very normal natures as abnormal and so developing national neuroses and psychoses which make us ridiculous, not only to ourselves but to every other nation. It has even succeeded in twisting our judgments in regard to politics and economics. For without a rational conception of the part, and the very normal part, sex plays in life, how can there be sanity in these other things? One cannot be wrong as to one vital point in life and right as to all others. We continue to assert, as a nation and as individuals, that everything sexual is wrong, while at the same time having sexual feelings and impulses which we can scarcely disguise even to ourselves and which we satisfy or over-compensate for in ways too ridiculous to mention (a Billy Sunday revival, for instance; a White Slave Crusade in which our papers blaze with sickening criticism; an insane, an impossible pursuit of money or vice, due to the repression of every other normal instinct). Truly, a goose nailed to the floor by its feet and stuffed daily to pro-

duce an enlarged and salable liver, could be no more ridiculous or pathetic than the average American debarred from every avenue of intelligence or effort save that which relates to money.

It is a bit curious, one cannot help remarking, that the widespread fame and weight of such sincere and eminent investigators as Kraft-Ebbing, Ellis, Freud and his host of followers, with all the profoundly moving evidence of the pathos of sex-repression which they offer, has not had more influence upon our national, if not the world's international, mind. The sorrows revealed! The grisly prison doors unlocked by the patient and brilliantly revealing researches of Freud alone! The old sorrows dragged from the depths of the repressed subconscious and at last permitted to come forth into the light, where the fortuitous and yet crushing weight of earthly illusion and error may be noted! And yet they have not apparently as yet enlightened or broadened us.

At this point I would like to present a citation from the writings of one of our leading neurologists and psychoanalysts (H. W. Frink) in regard to the type of patient (neurotic) pouring in upon him from all parts of America. "My own experience," he writes ("Morbid Fears and Compulsions," page 224), "is that the sexual factor comes to expression in every analysis at once, usually within the first two or three visits, and I am sure that for this result no special technique or dexterities are required; about all that is necessary being to let the patient talk. To the question, Why is the sexual factor dominant in every neurosis? I shall not attempt to make any detailed reply. The answer is perhaps to be sought in the direction

indicated by Meyer ("Discussion of Some Fundamental Issues in Freud's Psychoanalysis," State Hospital Bulletin, Vol. II, No. 4, 1910), when he says: 'No experience or part of our life is as much disfigured by convention as the sex feelings and ambitions.' That is to say, if we had other impulses which throughout the whole life of the individual were so consistently and unremittingly warped, cramped and deformed in every conceivable and unnatural manner (as they are in America) and they had the same strength to rebel against such treatment as have the sex impulses, then we might have neuroses in which they and not the sex factor played the dominant role."

For my own part, I cannot understand why it is that the human mind, and more especially the American or Anglo-Saxon mind, unless it is regulated by biogenetic forces over which it has no control but which have full control over it, functions so dully in regard to sex and its import. One would assume, from the average religious or social conception of the time, that the sole function of sex in all its ramifications is the production of more children, to live, work and die, according to the prescribed routine of the dullest Christian formula. But, unquestionably, sex means much more than that. While it is true that some of the minor professors of psychoanalysis are offering what they are pleased to term the "sublimation of the holophilic (or sex) impulse" into more "useful," or, at any rate, more agreeable fields of effort via suppression or restraint, this in my judgment is little more than a sop, and an obvious one, to the moralists. What is actually true is that via sex gratification—or perhaps better, its ardent and often defeated pursuit

—comes most of all that is most distinguished in art, letters and our social economy and progress generally. It may be and usually is "displaced," "referred," "transferred," "substituted by," "identified with" desires for wealth, preferment, distinction and what not, but underneath each and every one of such successes must primarily be written a deep and abiding craving for women, or some one woman, in whom the sex desires of any one person for the time being is centered. "Love" or "lust" (and the one is but an intellectual sublimation of the other) moves the seeker in every field of effort. It is the desire to enthrone and enhance, by every possible detail of ornamentation, comfort and color—love, sensual gratification—that man in the main moves, and by that alone. Protean as this impulse may be, and it takes many forms, it stands revealed as the underlying reality of a thousand astounding impulses or disguises — pathetic, lying, simulating, denying, but the same old impulse everywhere and under all circumstances. Refracted as it is by opposition, misunderstanding, failure into a million glistering and lovely or pathetic things, it may seem to be what it is not; but hold fast, trace it back, and there, at bottom, sex appears, a craving for love, and its accompanying sensual gratification, and there is no other.

But the thing which is especially interesting about America is its infantile blindness to all this and the pathetic and at least semi-neurotic condition into which we have fallen in consequence. As one views American life today it can be safely asserted that scarcely one of a hundred American men or women view this phase of life intelligibly, although they respond to it normally enough in some of its

other phases. Usually before their so-called vision, and between them and their daily deeds, hangs an inane and miasmatic cloud of cant and make-believe. The physiologically and biologically informed know, of course, how ridiculous is the assumption that sex union is the narrowly "moral" function which the religionists would have one believe, although moral it may well be in some larger constructive sense, as is any other life process, if life itself can be termed moral. But that it can involve, without becoming profoundly ridiculous, a narrow or sectarian religious interpretation, is open to question. That it has a sad, tragic, even ruthless aspect (read Maeterlinck's description of the struggles of some flowers to be born and continue the species) is not, scientifically at least, to be combatted. In its biological aspects it has many, many tragic sides, although so dull is the race to all but its most individual ambitions and needs that it cannot be expected to sense this either. Indeed, as expressed by the impulses in man (concocted by what psychic meditation below and on the part of what?), sex is an unregenerate and only partially controlled passion which has more as its aim perhaps than is dreamed of in the philosophies of man. It is a fire, a chemical explosion, really. It concerns not so much the individual as the race, the endless unbroken chain of men and women, however much any individual may think it concerns him alone. Instead of denouncing the individual for his mood in regard to all this, it might be more important to inquire how moral in their import are the elements which compound and bring about the explosion and to treat him as one of their victims.

The truth no doubt is that in this much-ma-

ligned impulse which chemical forces beyond and above the willing of men are compounding lies the destiny of man (if he has one), only we are not as yet able to fathom that destiny. Here we come, bottles of fluid dynamite (prepared by what satiric super-soul, and why?), and somewhere in the world is, or may be, another compound which will set us aflame —and we are supposed to connect this with a narrow religious order or theory! I will admit that for the necessities of social arrangement and relationship here, the necessary balances and inter-adjustments that go to make up a workable society of beings, some form of equation between the less and more avid sexually, the too hot and the too cold, must be and is struck, willy-nilly and regardless of individual or man's moral theory. But by what rule and rote? Is there so-called "justice" in it, or "reason," or a fixed social order or method of procedure? We see that in spite of our fixed methods of moral procedure the tragedies continue, the waves and flames of morality and immorality come and go. Our divorce rate! Our sex tragedies and districts! And what guide has the individual? The Golden Rule? A more liberal method of adjustment? In the past, Nature has tolerated polygamy, polyandry and an abbreviated monogamy, and may do so again. The stress and strain which the present social arrangements show are almost premonitory.

But one thing is certain: no hard-and-fast rule governing this impulse has worked with accuracy for any given length of time, anywhere. If there are discovered or discoverable rules for its control and best management in the interest of the race and so in the interest of the Creator they have not yet been an-

nounced. We hear of the duty of preserving the sancitity of the home, maintaining a wife and raising a family according to the monogamic theory. Well and good. But, outside of raising endless children to be slain in wars, vegetated in a routine factory life, worn threadbare in a vast and internecine struggle for existence, there is not so much to be said for that, either. Routine home life, even an artistic breeding-pen, can scarcely be the be-all and end-all of human existence, any more than may unrestrained license. And however comfortable or admirable or encouraging the average home may be to given individuals, it is not necessarily so to all. There are those who find it confining, destroying. And, again, religionists and theorists, moral and otherwise, as well as the great greedy syndics and master minds in business or politics, prey upon the fruit of the home and collect "spiritual" and material taxes and establish "spiritual" as well as material autocracies or over-lordships which in no wise make for sex morality any more than for the forces which destroy it. Vice, suborned by the wealthy and powerful, as well as the avid and perverse among the weak, feeds upon the fruit of the so-called moral home. The bull seal still conquers his fifty or a hundred, and the weakling none. In fact, in a so-called Christian realm the mistress abounds, and the high divorce rate attests much private dissatisfaction with the theory. Laws come and laws go; and still we are about where we were before. The gardens of Aphrodite still exist. The hetæra of Greece and Rome are still with us—in our back streets or our high-priced apartment houses. If we no longer have our streets of the so-called "fallen" or "evil" women, who walk in the

dark, is it not because caution has become the better part of trade? Are they not to be found behind closed doors in response to special rings, by card of admission, in our best streets? The endless pother! And still sex is as vigorous and dominant as ever it was. The riant scoffers nod and smile and accept the new rules.

Personally, after all this time, my conclusion is: (1), that no individual, however well or ill compounded physically, can make or unmake his moods or add one jot or tittle to his moral desires or perfections, although he and society (or convention) can exercise a certain amount of restraint—a restraint that will almost invariably prove irksome and which he will seek to evade; (2), that however much theorists, hypocrites and sincere religionists, chill-blooded or otherwise, may revile sex or attempt to restrain or destroy it, yet Nature (God or the devil, or the two in one) permits these wild fires to be generated in man, and, in spite of all punishments and hindrances, sees to it that his passions overlap his fears and judgments and cause him to do all the things that may be strictly forbidden him but which may nevertheless be of value to the race itself; (3), that man is not temperamentally or chemically a monogamous animal, however much the social conditions and necessities by which he finds himself surrounded in certain lands and times tend to make him believe so or fear, and that a rough balance or equation is all that is ever struck between his outward public deeds and his inner chemic condition; (4), that, to this hour, there is no city without its percentage of prostitution or hetæra of one grade or another; (5), that there is no city or town where some women or girls do not walk, secret-

ly or openly, to accomplish prostitution and where men do not, secretly or openly, encourage and pursue them, the chemic necessities of their being as much as poverty impelling them to do it; (6), that there is no city or town or countryside, anywhere, where adultery or fornication is not indulged in outside wedlock for love or pleasure; (7), that a high percentage of men in all walks, including priests and clergymen, look after some one type at least of woman and lust after her; (8), that a moderate percentage of women, in marriage and out, seek the affection of a given type of man temperamentally or chemically agreeable or appealing to them, and offer their bodies as a bid for or sacrifice to that affection; (9), that women crave monogamy where their affections or the interests of their children are involved; (10), that love of one woman or one man, or their several or joint love of children, is likely to overlay and put at rest, for the time being, the usual roving desires of sex; (11), that law in all special instances is absolutely helpless before passion, powerless either to interpret its psychology or fix a just measure of praise or blame; (12), that convention has not made, and cannot make, any headway against a chemical scheme of life which puts sex desires and all else as secondary or socially contributory.

Do I seem illogical or inclined to exaggerate? Think well over the things I have said. The world has a partially traceable history covering more than ten thousand years; in that time nations have risen and fallen, law codes have come and gone, religions have dominated and been swept away. In no law code and in no religion of any nation has the sex question, the need of moderation, duty to family and the like, been ignored. But in all that time the social

expression of sex has never been so much as modified, let alone done away with. The Mosaic law is all of three thousand years old, yet what has it availed? Are our women all pure, our men all moral? Yet, in the face of history and present-day occurrences, the facts of divorce courts, night courts, streets crowded with prostitution and kept women, men seeking constantly to lure women, and vice versa, all the million and one evidences in books, plays, newspapers and social life generally that sex is the keynote of existence, there are those who would bar all mention of it, harry the prostitute, unduly punish the fornicator, ostracise the woman who strays from the path of virtue or seeks in divorce a way out of a troubled marital state.

What to make of the brain of man under such circumstances? What to say of the thing that causes him to fight the passion of which he is a victim? Necessity for equation and balance in all things, a very rough balance which cares no more for the individual "good" or "bad" than we care for flies or gnats? Inherent love of moderation in some? Love of peace in some? Love of the reverse in others? The tendency of all things to become static, even passionate temperaments? Surely that, and nothing more. Yet, aside from that, there is something which does not care for the equation-seeking mood of either individuals or society, which is busy manufacturing and pouring into the world new individuals with all their new dreams, passions, lack of equation, lack of a sense of self-restraint, and sweeping away the old, the conservative, the religious, sanctimonious.

One of the sanifying recourses in life is, of course, to fix one's eye on youth and note what

it desires. Plainly, it is a fair expression of the thing that creates it, the chemic mood of the biologic force, for plainly it is closer to that which creates it. As the human or physical machine ages and wears out it is prepared, and then only, to accept the restraints and the equation which society, in order to maintain itself, requires; but not before. In the main, youth blazes with non-equational fires and it best represents that which makes it, the concocting chemic impulses below or behind life. Is youth wrong? Then so is the life impulse, for it builds youth freshly to its needs yearly, daily. The physical laws which seem to govern the biologic impulse after it expresses itself in the shape of youth, or man, and compels it for purposes of social expression to submit to restraints and equation, is another matter, inherent, perhaps, in the constitution of the universe itself and not to be avoided by the biologic impulse or its creatures. But this, as I have said before, does not provide us with *exact* rules for conducting ourselves here or how best to subdue or balance with other things the enormous fires with which we sometimes find ourselves lit. Better admit at once that hard-and-fast and cock-sure rules or laws are of no avail, and trust to the crude accidents of life to caution youth. A happy balance between the fires of youth and the fears and chills of age may be desirable, but, freely admitting that, can it be fixed by exact rule? We are inherent in some greater thing than man—Nature Herself. Only She knows.

One thing is sure: we are not done with the conflict and amazing super-impulses of sex, and are not likely to be soon. And if we were, would life be the varied, fascinating, humorous, poetic, tragic thing we see it to be? Sup-

pose the moralists ruled, with their stiff and narrow balance, and man accepted their quiescent dictates—then what? Contrast it with some of the freer, more distinguished periods—Greece, Rome, Italy during the Renaissance, France under the Louis, England under Elizabeth and Charles II. Consider. I for one see no immediate solution, and firmly believe there is none which does not end in complete mental quiescence—balance or its equivalent, intellectual and emotional or temperamental nothingness, decay and dissolution, with something not so balanced and therefore alive, to supersede, if we are to have any form of life at all.

SOME ASPECTS OF OUR NATIONAL CHARACTER

Our most outstanding phases, of course, are youth, optimism and illusion. These run through everything we do, affect our judgments and passions, our theories of life. As children we should all have had our fill of these, and yet even at this date and after the late war, which should have taught us much, it is difficult for any of us to overcome them. Still, no one can refuse to admire the youth and optimism of America, however much they may resent its illusion. There is always something so naïve about its method of procedure, so human and tolerant at times; so loutish, stubborn and ignorantly insistent at others, as when carpetbag government was forced on the South after the Civil War and Jefferson Davis detained in prison for years after the war was over.

Great men and great events, so I was told in my youth, went to the making of us. The dreams of justly dissatisfied and downtrodden souls elsewhere, so our histories read, impelled them to seek in a new land freedom from the tyrannies which had oppressed them abroad. Once here, they were prepared to fight and die in order that the vision which had led them forth might not end as an airy insubstantial nothing. For us (fatalistically, at any rate, if not really) Columbus sailed from Palos over the uncharted deep; Magellen rounded the Cape of Good Hope; and Vasco da Gama, Cape Horn; Balboa discovered the Pacific, Hendrick Hudson the Hudson; De Soto and Marquette the Mississippi. For us, especially (although before that, great sociologic, economic and mor-

al dreamers had been at work), Locke, Paine, Von Humboldt, Voltaire, Fourier, de Tocqueville, Rousseau thought and dreamed.

In our new land, fresh upon an unbroken soil, giant spirits swiftly arose to testify to the significance of these dreams—Washington, Jefferson, Franklin, Adams, Hamilton, intellectual and social enthusiasts all—who saw a vision, or seemed to, and dreamed tremendous dreams of the wonders to come to our nation and race, and because of it and through it to the world at large. We, more than any other nation, because ours was the youth and the strength, were to lift and maintain aloft the banner of intellectual and spiritual freedom. We were to do tremendous things, not for the human pocketbook but the human mind and soul. Our children and our children's children were to be free, progressive, fearless, mentally and spiritually alert, entirely loosened from the trammels and chains of superstition and the degradation of poverty and want.

Well, it is quite true that we have done some things: fought wars for our "rights"; freed the slaves (which, however, England did in her territories before we did and without bloodshed); "liberated" Cuba (to no exploitation since?); struggled with the Philippine and Mexican problems (to no final solution however); and then helped to crush the Kaiser without seeking gain for ourselves. However, it is also quite true that at no time in our history has this ideal been quite realized, even though in the hearts of a modest percentage of the population, as can be most safely asserted, this has been a dominant and moving ideal. Perhaps its realization is not within the possibilities of life. We are all slaves essentially, and there have as yet been no measures devised

whereby strong and weak people will not be generated at one and the same time side by side. But it is useless to say to the average American that democracy is a dream and can never be realized. He will never believe it. Wars come and go. Strong men arise and plot and conquer and disappear. Weak men fall, and the poor are as much put upon here as anywhere and ignored and laughed at; but in spite of all these facts which endure in the face of every dream—of love, heaven, perfect happiness as well as perfect liberty—the American goes on dreaming his sweet dream, and will. Perhaps he already has all the democracy there will ever be, because he believes that he has it.

Millions of Americans born on this soil or arriving here from other lands believe thus. With them it was and perhaps still is a glowing and enlivening thought that whether they were or not they were supposed to be free. Their children and their children's children somehow are to be heirs to a magnificent and comforting land, one over which a wise and generous form of government, the fruit of the dreams and genius of their forefathers, their generosity and social aspiration, is to rule and ensure all the blessings for which they had hoped and fought.

Well and good. The thing has substance enough even now in the face of some setbacks and because of virgin soil and boundless untouched opportunities, unharassed by war or slavery, which offer to physical labor as well as to the imagination of those who come or who went before us, great opportunity. Their success hitherto has been written into our songs, our books, the public messages of our statesmen and patriots. Even to this day, many who

lack even a shadow of the substance of these dreams are still dreaming, if not in their reality at least in their possibility and eventuality here. I in my youth was one of these. I saw in America what many others around me seemed to see: i. e., many if not all of the things for which our forefathers fought and bled: generous, protective and encouraging laws in all walks of life; an amazingly free and unterrified press; a warm, sympathetic and encouraging educational system reaching down to the poorest and humblest child and helping it to rise and better its station; a real political referendum or ballot system by which all projected laws and movements for the betterment and control of the impulses and tendencies of the people were formulated and with their consent;—and these seemed real enough.

Well?

Well, I still think we have a modicum of these things. The pressure of the strong upon the weak is as yet not too grinding perhaps, and let us hope may never be, although it is daily becoming sharper. The poor are being put upon while being loudly told that they are not —fed on air and kind words, as it were. The powerful are learning that the poor, here as elsewhere, are either fools or, being poor, may not help themselves; a very dangerous state of mind to begin with, I think.

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Yes, in recent years a certain change has come over the spirit of our original dreams. Our bright morning sky has been overcast with something that was by no means foreseen by the charming and gracious idealists who framed our Constitution and, better yet, our ideals. America, ungracious as it may seem

on the part of one who has prospered well enough in it, is neither so free nor so liberal as many imagined it would be. Our press, our school system, our laws, our political methods —do these today answer to the incisive aspiration which was characteristic, or at least was supposed to be characteristic, of the spirit of those who generated the American Republic?

Let us see.

The fact is that what is supposed to be and what is true of American history are two very different things. Because as a people we have instinctively craved some things and have written it into a Constitution that man is inalienably entitled to them, it does not follow that we have them; although most Americans, I am inclined to fear, think so. If I read American history aright, the men who drew up the Declaration of Independence and framed our Constitution were men who, like ourselves today, were in the grip of an ideal which had very little to do with their own condition or the actual working necessities and conditions of life as seen about them. Far from being democratic at that time America was quite the reverse, a most stratified and nobility-aping nation with feudal servants and thralls at the bottom and landed and all but titled proprietors at the top ("History of the Great American Fortunes," Myers). But those same leaders and many followers appear to have been in the grip of a time-spirit or movement which had its roots as far back in time as the thirteenth century, when Europe seemed to give new birth or breath to the pagan spirit and to revolt at the mummery and flummery of kings and the gorgeous paraphernalia of a religious idea run completely to seed. Hess and Bruno were but the fore-steppers of Luther. Bacon,

Locke, Voltaire, de Tocqueville, Rousseau and Paine, had much to do with the spirit of our American Constitution. Indeed, it is a question whether the latter six, and especially Rousseau with his "Social Contract," his dream of a new social arrangement in which the State should do so much more than it had ever before attempted to do for its constituent units, are not the makers of the Declaration of Independence. Yet nothing that Paine, Voltaire, Locke or Rousseau dreamed or believed concerning the essential capacity of man to govern himself is absolutely true. What is true is that autocracy or single-headed government without genius and a love of humanity is closely allied, or very likely to be, to tyranny; whereas democracy or multiple-headed rotation in control is likely to prove even more dangerous where it is merely dull. It has not even the advantage of being spectacular and interesting. Whether the individual, thus protected against tyranny, is likely to prove a greater and more useful engine or mechanism for the development of more and better thought, more beautiful dreams and ideals than the world ever had before, remains to be seen. Dominant America, now in the saddle of the world, has an opportunity to prove this.

But does history provide a single analogy? Scarcely. The older nations were not built so much for the individual, that he might have life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness guaranteed him, as for the perpetuation and glory of the State itself, or the King thereof. This was true of Athens and Sparta as well as the Roman Republic, and more recently of Germany. It is very doubtful whether the modern republic is made any more for the humble, single individual than the old-time kingdom. Is not

the modern trust-magnate or money-baron who taxes and drives him by his wage arrangements and food extortion as much of a King, or at least a medieval baron, as any such that ever lived? Take Rockefeller, for example. How different is he, or others like him—Morgan for instance—to the Dons who in combination ruled Spain, laughing at its King, or the money-lords who direct the policy of England today, as did their equivalents in Russia and Germany before the late war?

The truth is that it is given to few, if any, individuals of a nation to understand it. By some it is assumed that the individual must rule. By others the mass. Neither is true. The mass at times must be pitted against the individual, and vice versa. But neither must disappear entirely. That would spell death or slumber. It is also a question whether any nation at any time ever collectively understands itself. Do not some portions of its units always misunderstand other portions? Take our part in the late great war. Sentimentally, a fair portion of America's integral units assumed that we entered the war to "free humanity from slavery" and "to make the world safe for democracy," a very large order; but, to quote one of President Wilson's later utterances, it was for a somewhat different purpose, "the destruction of every arbitrary power anywhere that can separately and secretly and of single choice disturb the peace of the world." Well, that is not exactly the same as making it safe for democracy—but still—. The truth probably is that the nation, propelled by its instinct for self-preservation, entered the war to make America safe. It is not at all unlikely that sooner or later we should have gone to war with Germany had there been no Euro-

pean war. Germany was known to regard with avid eye many phases of this Western hemisphere, its resources, institutions, pretensions; so America very practically, however sentimental the reasons given may be, engaged herself on the side of four or five powers of the first rank (some long friendly, others not uniformly so) to protect her future interests.

From a practical point of view there were, and of course were sure to be, many who disagreed with the somewhat sentimental interpretation of all this. More than one person of authority at the time privately ventured the opinion that in giving so much to aid Europe something should have been done to secure for America its future integrity in the Western hemisphere. "In so far as Mexico, Canada, the West Indies and the Pacific are concerned," wrote one authority, "should not everything be done to further our interests there?" Canada, one would say, thinking of a nation that should be looking reasonably well after its own welfare, should be made at least sovereign—that is, independent of Great Britain—and compelled to enter into commercial and definite offensive and defensive alliances with us; the forts along our borders dismantled and all plans to oppose us at any future time set aside. Again, all of the West Indies, so it was argued, now controlled by European powers, should have been exacted or made independent under our protection so as not to fall into the hands of our enemies in the future. Should not, asked some, a halt have been called to European aggression in China, the open door insisted upon? . . . The seas should have been made absolutely neutral—policed by America, along with others. A great, even dominant, merchant marine should have been built up.

Why the expenditure of endless blood and treasure, with no definite strength added to the point of view—which the United States represents—the right of her ideas as well as those of other people to prosper and grow strong?

But witness what was actually done, where our chief interests lay: Belgium, a country that had never been a completely sovereign State with rights which were inalienable, but a State which was the product of the fears of Europe, commanding our sympathies as though it had been individual and free throughout history. It was torn from Holland by England and France only as recently as 1830. England and France chose its reigning house—the English Queen's uncle, who was speedily married to the daughter of the King of France. Yet with Ireland, India, Egypt, the Philippines, the Boer Republic and other violated lands and nationalities before us, the woes of this one country developed our greatest interest. Japan guaranteed the neutrality of Korea, but annexed it with the consent of the powers. England, before our very eyes, suppressed attempts at "self-determination by smaller nations of their rights" in Egypt, Ireland, India, the Boer Republic. Yet we thought nothing, or at least did nothing. Yet the Balkans, for some peculiar reason not easily to be explained, aroused another sentimental emotion in us. Although one would have said the interest of America in the question of what should become of Russia, Turkey and the Balkans was not direct, and from an old-time practical and political point of view never could be, yet America interfered there as elsewhere, laying down, or attempting to, a rule for the future organization of Europe (self-determination of nations!), and that with-

out any referendum to the American voter, any definite constitutional inquiry as to what *he* thought of all this.

Yet the neglect of the latter, most important in a self-determining democracy or republic, one would suppose, was passed over as nothing, while it was assumed or preached by those in the lead, and in the face of much repressed grumbling, that we were engaged unquestionably with those who were nearest to and best for us intellectually, spiritually and in every other way, nations which would seek, or had invariably sought our welfare in the past. But history, of course, demonstrated that this was not true and that such alliances were only momentarily beneficial, if at all, and later were broken without so much as a by-your-leave or a farewell. But did this serve to alter the state of public feeling or illusion? By no means. In so far as England was concerned it appeared to strengthen it, although this was the first time she had ever been on our side (1776, 1812, 1865, 1896); (1897-8, the Boer War). In all those instances we were anything but pro-British. So again with France in 1788 and 1815, when we practically declared war on her in favor of England, although she had reason to expect our sympathy and aid. Our attitude toward Italy has varied, as it has toward Russia: now friendly, now the reverse. Taking into consideration the brevity of all international alliances one would have supposed that it would have been the imperative duty of American statesmen to make sure that in the course of a temporary alliance with European powers the best interests of the American nation would not have been imperiled, but being powerful and optimistic we assumed that our interests were safe enough, or, if not, that

we could make them so, and let it go at that. But supposing we had not been so powerful? Would God, Justice, Mercy, Truth, Progress and a number of other things invoked during the great argument, have been on our side? All failure, some one has said, is due to but two things: weakness and error. Suppose we had been weak? Or foolish?

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A singular thing in connection with this same great war and the American people, their history, is the attitude of this nation toward the French, at this time and earlier. At the beginning of the war America—Christian America—was decidedly opposed to the French, on moral and intellectual grounds, their literature, their art, their stage, their vile tendencies to naturalism in thought and deed. Even before this, at the beginning of our history, the original Colonists, although of various nationalities—English, French, Dutch, Swedish, Spanish—were finally consolidated under English rule and a fairly systematic warfare waged against the French and the Indians, whom both the French and the English were employing by turns in their contest for supremacy. Yet later, at the time of the dispute between the English and the American Colonies, which ended in the Revolutionary War, French sympathy, due to ancient antipathy to England as well as the intense opposition to autocratic oppression in France, drew the Americans and the French together in a bond of sympathy. The French sent various Generals and Admirals (Rochambeau, Lafayette, Count d'Estaing, Count de Grasse) to help the Americans on land and sea. Yet in 1788-9, when France and Spain declared war on England, and especially later

(after the French Revolution in 1789) when the French were struggling to maintain their democratic independence and England was seeking to put the Bourbon rulers back on the throne of France, do you believe that American sympathy was with the French? If you do, you don't know American history. Under the offensive and defensive agreement or treaty entered into between France and the Colonies in 1778, when the latter were struggling for their independence, it was confidently expected by the French that the Americans would help them against England, but nothing of the sort followed. When, in the belief that America must sympathize with France, "democratic" societies, after the French model, were organized throughout the States, and later Genet, the French Minister to America, attempted to fit out privateers on American soil and to establish admiralty ports for the condemnation of prizes, there was great opposition to this. Only read the history of that period (Burgess: "The Middle Period"; Babcock: "American Nationality"; Hart: "American History Told by Contemporaries"). America, according to this new attitude, was now to look out for itself, and in consonance with this in 1793 Washington issued his famous Neutrality Proclamation, leaving France to take care of herself. After the issuance of the Proclamation, Genet, still believing that American sympathy must be with France, appealed to the people and openly defied the Government. His recall followed, of course.

Then followed a very curious state of affairs. The French Revolutionists, angered by the official attitude of America, fell to attacking American shipping, looking upon it as a hostile power aiding England. American commissionaires, sent to adjust our relations with France,

were ignored and representatives of the Revolutionists (or so it was claimed), using the initials " X Y Z," demanded tribute and a bribe. Hence the famous comment of William Pinckney, the American lawyer and statesman, who said "Millions for defense, but not one cent for tribute." And that against our late ally, France!

President Adams laid the correspondence before Congress, and the whole country was aroused. War with France was thought to be inevitable and (1798) Washington was reappointed Commander-in-Chief of the Army. Owing to the activity of French sympathizers in America and rabid criticisms in the newspapers of the Government's stand in this matter, the Federalists, who were then in power and who had no sympathy for France, secured the passage (1798) of the famous Alien and Sedition Laws. These laws gave the Government power to banish "foreigners" (meaning the French) from the country and to suppress obnoxious newspapers. Actual warfare with France went on upon the sea! But these laws, being against the then "fundamental ideas" of Americans in regard to free speech and the right of asylum to immigrants, were regarded by enough of the people as proving all the charges of tyranny urged against the Federalists, and, at the next election (1800) they were defeated. In the meantime Virginia and Kentucky had resolved, owing to these same Alien and Sedition Laws, that a State might nullify a law of the United States. Congress, because of French attacks on our shipping, formulated the "Spoliation Claims," and it was not until Napoleon (1800) as First Consul of France, agreed to abandon the French Claim that America was still bound by the treaty of 1778 to aid her that these

latter were abandoned and peace reached. In other words, we refused France aid in her most trying hour. Yet twelve years later, because of England's continuous attacks upon our ships and seamen, trying to prevent our dealing with France in any way, we went to war with her—only she did not quit until the victory over Napoleon removed the cause of her alleged grievances. One hundred years later, as we have just seen (1914-19), although opposition to France on moral grounds had been steadily growing in America, still in the contest with Germany all the refused sympathy and gratitude of 1800 was revived and France became once more the object of our tenderest solicitude. So much for national moods and gratitudes.

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Another curious phase of the late great war, as of all countries and wars perhaps, but one which illustrates the American temperament rather clearly, was the attitude of America to one and another phase of it, the psychologic flounderings and back somersaults, as it were, concerning one problem and another. For one thing, as we all perhaps remember, the preliminary internal contest was for peace at any price practically, and any one who suggested mobilizing a large army for self-defense (if nothing more) was, if not a traitor, something of an undesirable citizen. Mr. Wilson, if you will recall, was elected the second time on the slogan "He Kept Us Out of War"; also before we entered the war we were told what a blessing it was in one way, commercially at least. Later, as Germany appeared to be winning and America was actually threatened, the whole world had to be made "safe for democracy,"

an order so large that publicity was quietly refused it in all countries outside the United States. But that was the sweet milk fed to Americans. Later still, when it came to actually declaring war, although this is a republic and the people are supposed to have a voice in deciding that which they do, no willingness on the part of the authorities, executive or legislative, to refer the matter back to the people for a vote, was in evidence.

And once war was declared, the people were allowed or compelled to "take out" whatever opposition they might feel in private thought, not public or open opposition. It was openly admitted that a referendum might have prevented a declaration of war, yet afterwards public complaint was ruggedly suppressed—by the courts and officials, if not by the whole people, astounding farces by way of law being perpetrated. Still later on, when it came to "raising" troops, money and supplies (controlling food), volunteer service in the first of these fields was swiftly abandoned, and conscription, with all which that implied in the way of force and putting down opposition to it, free speech as well as free action, was used. "Public sentiment," as fostered by an administrative press bureau, to say nothing of much foreign propaganda, controlled or overawed the papers. Overawing sentences, such as forty years in the penitentiary, for circulating a pamphlet in opposition to the current will of the Government, were uniformly handed down in all parts of the nation by a judiciary whose independence, sanctity and what not were supposed to be the bulwark of American liberty. But at whose request? By what authority? The necessity of strict and impartial justice?

I am not quarreling with the process; I am

showing the thin line of difference between autocracy and democracy where necessity or passing opinion favors one course of conduct or another. Later on, when suggestions in regard to food-saving were rather freely ignored, the "suggestions" became not only suggestions but restrictions and, to quote the food administrator, "the restrictions will be voluntary, *but* any evasion will result in compulsory enforcement." Similarly in connection with bond-selling; the people were to lend and lend and lend because they loved their country, but (I am quoting a leading administrative organ) "the period has arrived (October, 1918) to discontinue wooing and soft-soaping. God help the man who is found with filled pockets if the war goes on because of a financial failure here."

And it was not alone in such matters where some independence or at least latitude might have been presupposed, but it extended to a press censorship and an intolerance of opposing opinion which compared rather favorably to darkest days of Russian autocracy. Although America is always naïve and "free," its innumerable blessings of tolerance and the like prated of, still there was but one *publicly endured* opinion in relation to the conduct of the war, and that was pro-war. Any other form of thought was rigidly put down, although in England and France one might say one's say with all but destructive freedom. One woman in New York was actually fined for saying that "Ireland was as good as England any day!" A booklet entitled "Shall Morgan Own the Earth?" and intended to show how the war was profiting some individuals, was first investigated by the Department of Justice and pronounced immune, then later the author was urged "as a patriotic duty" to change the title;

still later, even under the milder title, it was refused the privilege of the mails by the Post-office Department and the author warned that "to circulate it would subject you to ten years in prison. You know it violates the Espionage Law."

And to what astounding fol-de-rol in regard to the conduct of all wars in the future, if not in the past, were we not treated! There were to be no more brutal wars of any kind anywhere. Ever! Oddly enough, the horrors of the Civil War, especially the part of the Northern soldiers in it, were entirely forgotten; also the "water cure" and "Hell Roaring Jake Smith" of the Philippine campaign were forgotten—those natives, for instance, who were stood up in rows and shot down one after another by an officer with a revolver or who had water poured down their throats and into their noses until they died of strangulation, because they could not, or did not choose to, reveal that which possibly they did not even know. Nations as well as individuals have short memories. Before we entered the war it really looked as though a great war must necessarily be fought with tooth-brushes, so great was the opposition to brutality. Later we were never to fight any more wars at all, or if we did it was all to be ended by one war. A little later one of our greatest agonies was that we could not visit on the enemy something much more terrible than they were visiting on us—national annihilation, no less. We could not live in peace with autocracy—although, forsooth, we could live in peace with the Japanese, the Chinese, the Imperial Russian Government before it fell, England in India, England in Egypt—anything and everything, indeed, save with a nation that did not fight as we did. Never again

were the erring nations to be restored to their old place in the world. Between chortles over an immense trade increase, a finally united railway system, new and better methods of food control, intensive agriculture, lessons in self-denial and thought, still, and idiotic as it may seem, the war was an unmixed evil; the Germans were all wrong. "The passage of a thousand years will not obliterate the memory of Germany's crime. She will get her good name back when Judas does." (I am quoting from the Cincinnati Enquirer of March, 1918.) And this in the face of the above-recited blessings pointed out in this very paper! What are you to say for such a ragbag point of view, a national intelligence that can blow hot and cold with the same breath?

Actually, it looked for a time as though America were suffering from pernicious mental anemia. Its whole original significance as a forward-pushing, clear-thinking nation appeared to have been clouded over, and, not unlike the bee and the coral insect which apparently serve only one or two purposes in life —the one to gather honey and pollenize the flowers, the other to build a coral island—that it had been invented by Nature to devise and manufacture machinery which it should never have the courage or brains to apply to the limits of their possibilities. It was as though the Germans and the English and the Japanese, seeing the peculiar gifts and mental limitations of the American, were to be permitted to use his gifts, quite as we use the stored labor of the bee or the coral insect, and leave him to go on moiling in his brainless mechanistic way. For the average American, who could so easily invent a flying machine, a submarine, a range-finder for guns, a revolving turret, a steel-pro-

tected battleship, a steamboat, and what not, was being urged to believe, at first, that he had no heart for their use and that he was "too proud to fight" or lacked the courage to face the horrible grinding necessities of life; later that he was the greatest fighter of all. Only, having proved that, he was still to believe that he was here only to save the world, never by any chance to further his own interests. His great inventions were to be put aside like toys or sold to others or reserved for moral purposes only.

For note, up to the hour of sheer tragic compulsion, everything was, and no doubt still is, to the average American, a matter of morality, and morality, take note, in the limited sense in which he understood and appreciated morals up to that time. You might invent a battleship wherewith to defend yourself and kill other people, but if you used it for any but a Christian or moral purpose, or the enemy who was non-Christian got it (and used it) it was terrible, shameful, a moral crime, not to be blotted out by a thousand years of expiation. To an American, a machine, however deadly in intention, or its method of slaying, was not to be used unless some distinctly moral end was to be achieved by it. And he was to judge as to the moral end involved. But, to his horror, he was finding and did find that the savage and the pagan could get hold of his machine gun or his flying machine, or submarine, or his battleship, or chemic invention of any kind, and turn it on him without any moral compunction whatsoever—and to his still further Christian horror it worked just as well for the savage or the pagan as it did for him. Nature, or God, did not prevent the submarine from discharging a torpedo at an unarmed merchant-

man any more than it aided the firing of one from a Christian submarine at a pagan battleship. In short, Nature seemed to be without Christianity or Christian morals, and this shocked the American terribly. He found that he had to lay aside, for the time being anyhow, his fine-spun theories and fight in any way that he could, and he proceeded to do so. Whereupon, he won. But to the American, nevertheless, and in spite of all this, Nature was and is still strictly moral. She has fixed, definite and Christian ways by which she works. Whenever the good American by any chance discovers that Nature is betraying him in any way, not working according to the code as handed down at Sinai, or the Mount in Palestine, he is horror-stricken! What! Nature not working according to the Ten Commandments? The weak do not inherit the earth? "Thou shalt not kill" not a universal law? "Thou shalt not steal or commit adultery" not chemic or psychic truth running through all nature? Who says so? Where is our God who told us these things? Why does he not act in our behalf? Why does he not confound the enemy in his blasphemies, destroy him, for flouting these fundamental religious truths?

But behold, God does not, or did not act until the Americans, (bestirring themselves and laying aside their theorizing, proceeded to fight as do the heathen. Then and then only, with the moral and exegetic rust rubbed off and the good American, standing up vital and dangerous, did the tide turn. Up to that hour the tide was indifferently going against him. The heathen, noting his mood, had picked up the American's subtle inventions where he laid them down—fine, powerful, complete but immoral instruments—and had used them for "im-

moral" purposes. And the machines and the schemes of the American, moral though he thought they were, worked just as well for the unmoral heathen as for himself. To his pathetic horror and utter Christian decay he found that if he was to succeed at all he must not only invent subtle and deadly things, but apply them in the same spirit in which he invented them or other people would—horrific Nature, working through other non-Christian nations quite as effectively as it worked through good Christian Americans. In other words, Nature was not Christian, not moral, in the sense that a race or an organized society working to protect its selfish internal arrangements and comforts may be, and no amount of energetic spouting on this score helped him in the least. Nature, or God, or what you will, showed that it cared no whit, not a snap of her or his fingers, what becomes of man or an American with his theories, religious or otherwise, unless he was able to protect himself. A man or a nation had to have wealth and power to survive, and if the Germans had had more power they would have survived, methods or means to the contrary notwithstanding. Ten thousand pagan shrines did not save Rome from the pacifist destruction which Christianity involved. Ten million Christian churches spouting peace and non-warlike ways could not and did not save America or any other country from a nation which put its faith in war and the ruthless forces of Nature herself. Only greater war on our part could do that, and did.

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But let us consider some of America's other equally potent and definite moods or opinions in regard to some other things: the negro for one. By the year 1700 slavery, which up to

that time had been more or less a matter of individual preference or taste, there being no general Colonial agreement in regard to it, had become an economic institution in Colonial life. A legalized status of Indian, white and negro servants had preceded slavery in almost all, if not all, the English-maintained colonies; but apparently it paid to make them slaves, and they were so made in spite of the legal fact that they were not. Later the difference in the industries of the several States made slavery more desirable in some States than in others, and then the natural boundary lines of the slave territory began to develop. Georgia and South Carolina especially were clamoring for slave-labor on the tobacco, cotton and rice plantations; whereas in the North it was found to be an unsatisfactory system, and so there was early developed in those Colonies a sentiment against a negro population and the institution of slavery in general. It cannot be said that this was due entirely to the economic disadvantage of keeping slaves in the North—there always existed some opposition to slavery in the minds of individuals—but would it have been effective if slave labor had been profitable—as profitable, say, as it was in the South? Jefferson, for instance, wrote a denunciation of slavery into his draft of the Declaration of Independence, but later, owing to its probable effect on slave-holding Colonies, erased it. And negroes were freely lynched and burned in New York City in 1712 and 1741 because they were suspected of a desire to rebel against slavery. A public slave-market was established in New York City as early as 1709!

Yet to hear the average Christian American of today or earlier talk of slavery and its horrors and the great war fought to free the negro,

you might assume that he liked him. Far from it. Although a Northern Congress (March 2d, 1867) attempted to impose universal manhood suffrage on the South and (1875) passed a law forbidding discrimination against negroes in inns, public conveyances, theaters and other places, aimed principally at the South, still the negro has never been accepted in the spirit of these laws either in the North or South. In any residence neighborhood anywhere in America, when the black man begins to come in the whites move out. Excellent as he may be, and I have known many who were wholly admirable, he is not even wanted in the same churches or schools. And the feeling, instead of growing less, becomes stronger. Almost daily he is burned alive somewhere in America, and for all but indifferent crimes. America may have fought and bled for his physical freedom, but she does not want him about; and when, as in 1917 in East St. Louis, employers attempted to use him to break a strike, he was murdered (117 of him in that instance), his homes burned, his wives and children driven out of the region; and in the far South, where one of him has even so much as insulted a deputy sheriff, he has been done to death, he and his entire family. Yet the American has no plan for the negro—his threatening future here. He merely allows the question to go begging, trusting to luck, no doubt. Puzzle: does the American citizen want the negro, or doesn't he?

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Take once more the matter of the American and the idle, greedy or predatory rich, as you please, and their attitude toward America, all being citizens of the same land. Because a Colonial American once wrote it down in our Declaration of Independence that men are

created free and equal, that they are, and *of right* ought to be, entitled to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness at the hands of their fellow-citizens and the world, the American ever since has been amazed and troubled by the curious human or chemic contradictions of and oppositions to this, not only in others but himself. Struggling along trying to be free and happy he finds that he is constantly interfered with by others who are doing the same thing, and that, Declaration of Independence or no Declaration of Independence, the curious fact remains that the strong, the ruthless, the shrewd get along as well here as they do anywhere and that they are constantly developing ways and means of undermining him and foreshortening his peace and happiness in favor of their own.

Thus, in illustration: (1) A Federal judge (1919) ruled that although Congress (1918) had forbidden any one to compel children of ten or more years of age to labor in cotton mills, still it was unconstitutional for Congress so to forbid and those who wished could so employ children. Result, hundred of thousands of children returned to eleven hours per day factory labor.

(2) A New Jersey judge, one Gumere by name, ruled (1900) that a child's life, lost in an accident on a railroad or other public conveyance, was not worth more than one dollar, the child not being as yet a source of profit to its parents.

(3) An Ohio circuit judge (William H. Taft, afterwards President of the United States) ruled (1893) that quitting work without the consent of the employer was a criminal offense on the part of an employee.

(4) The Federal Supreme Court ruled (1908) that arbitration in labor disputes is unconsti-

tutional, therefore something which an employer may not even enter upon with his employees.

(5) The Oregon Supreme Court decided (1903) that a citizen might be legally held in duress (jailed) for one month without trial—this in the face of explicit prohibition on the part of the American Constitution.

(6) The Massachusetts Supreme Court held in one dispute (1906) that where conditions are unsatisfactory there is no remedy open to labor save by individual and personal suit; union or combined action being illegal or unconstitutional.

(7) Four magnates, two of them controlling the production and two the distribution of milk for and in New York City, decided (January 19, 1919) that since they could not agree as to how the profits of the sale of milk in New York City were to be divided among them, New York was to have no milk until they could agree. Time of city without milk, one month.

(8) One Barnet Baff, wholesale chicken merchant in New York City, was murdered because he would not enter upon a scheme with other chicken-wholesalers to fix prices and extort a higher profit from the public. Secondary executors, but not primary instigators or murderers, were caught and electrocuted.

(9) In Lachnor vs. New York (198 U. S. 45) a majority of the judges of the New York Court of Appeals held unconstitutional a law limiting the hours of labor of bakers, many of whom (women) were forced to toil twelve hours daily in cellars to earn wages barely sufficient to keep them alive. The Court held that this law was void because it interfered with freedom of contract.

(10) In Ives vs. South Buffalo Ry. Co. (94

N. E. R. 431), a case in which a railroad employee, crippled for life while at work and without "contributory negligence," sued for recompense, the New York Court of Appeals unanimously decided that the law under which the suit was brought was unconstitutional. The judges admitted the injustice, since the man was helpless, but held the Constitution responsible.

. . . One might thus go forward for pages, I merely cite these in order to present a few definite instances. The truth is that while the average American imagines he is better looked after and more free here than he would be elsewhere, it is more a matter of thought than anything else. As to his daily earning and living capacity, while it is true that he gets more pay he also pays more for what he buys. A rising scale of wages has so regularly been accompanied by a lowering of the purchasing power of the dollar that he has not been much comforted by higher wages. In fact, the National Department of Labor (February, 1919), after studying family budgets in various cities of the country, announced that the then exorbitant cost of necessities bore heaviest on incomes of one thousand dollars or *less* although five per cent of the population controlled ninety-five per cent of the wealth of the nation. And one should further note the rising Protection policy of a hundred years, under which the trusts flourished without any notable increase of wages to the local consumer, and the local consumer paid uniformly higher prices than those paid by foreigners for the same grade of goods, often the very same goods made here and shipped abroad. This protection explains the American multimillionaire; also the American beggar and his

slum. It also explains the profiteer. If the average American has had a little more of food and clothes than the men of some other countries, he has also been confronted by the very irritating spectacle of thousands upon thousands who have so much more than he has or can get. He has been made to appear as poor as any churchmouse anywhere, and, worst of all, his woes get but small attention from those who, financially able to control his only medium of expression, the newspapers, insist upon telling him that he is well and happy. If any one should doubt this, let him consult, for one thing, the report of the Federal Trade Commission appointed by Congress (Report handed down June, 1918), wherein it was charged and proved that large exactions and safe profiteering permitted more than one giant concern to double, treble, even quintuple, its capitalization and still earn from 100 to 227 per cent in one instance. Coal, valued at five cents a ton in the ground, was being sold for twenty-two dollars a ton in New York —not over two hundred and fifty miles away. Milk was shoved up rapidly from seven to seventeen-and-one-half cents a quart, and with no interference on the part of any one and no effort to pool the wasteful competition and duplication of system which, on the other hand, were offered as an excuse for the necessity of the more than 100 per cent increase. Wheat, potatoes, meat, oil, sugar rose in proportion. There was no corresponding increase in the wages, save to unionize labor (which was the only form of labor in a position to demand a just share, and which constituted but ten per cent of all employed). And these had to indulge in three hundred and sixty-seven strikes in the first three years of the war to effect even so much as a twenty per cent increase.

(I am quoting figures furnished by the United States Bureau of Labor.) When complaint was made, one enthusiastic retort on the part of a corporation press was that the natural law of supply and demand must be allowed to work, that interference with exorbitant prices meant curtailment of production at the source. The poor producer, robbed of his just right to high prices under a strenuous demand, would become discouraged and quit! On the other hand, the producer was constantly complaining that he was getting little more than before, while the rapidly increasing cost of labor was cited as proving the need of a from 100 to 1000 per cent increase on everything—shoes, clothes, food, rent.

That is all simple and interesting enough when one accepts human nature for what it is: a thing of rough balances and equations only or a catch-as-catch-can struggle in which the strong or the shrewd survive and the weak go under. But when, in the same land in which these things occur, the air is full of a huge hubbub over the extreme merits of democracy, and when at the same time any one who says anything against profiteering or intimates that democracy as such may be subject to at least some of the faults of autocracy is looked upon as an enemy, if not an enemy alien, it becomes slightly anachronistic, to say the least.

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It is also a matter of pride with most of us, frequently expressed in disparagement of our European contemporaries, that we are a nation of workers. To hold a position in any American community, so the thought runs, a man must have a job. We do not conceal our contempt for the chap who fails to go down to an office or a business every day. Often, of course, our ostentatious *workers* do go down

but do very little work. Still, somehow it is felt by the public at large that every man owes it to the community or the nation to put in from six to ten hours outside of the residential district doing something, if no more than twiddling his thumbs. Hence the huge commuting armies oscillating to and fro, between home and office or factory. And yet can it be said that American commercial activity is so immensely more profitable than that of any other nation? Or even as much so? During the late great war it was actually proved that both Germany and England had shrewder and more profitable business schemes and methods. The German plan for national co-operative buying was one. Again, the superior efficiency of the Germans and even the English was one of the facts which burst like a flash of lightning out of a clear sky upon the astonished American, the instantaneous skill with which all national resources —food, clothing, transportation, man-power— were mobilized and put at the services of the nation, the relative cheapness of it all, the efficiency with which it was maneuvered once it was in the hands of the Government. Yet the American business man as well as the American executive, while English and French Commissionaries were instructing our factory masters and "Captains of Industry," had been bustling down to his desk each day, his telephone to his ear, or racing from one directors' meeting to another—and the result to America was the largest war debt per capita for time of service in the war and number of men involved of any nation in the world, not even excepting Russia. Question: Is the American business man as efficient as we think he is? As honest? As patriotic? Is he?

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Another curiosity of American character is, or was before the war, its adoration of all things foreign. Everything abroad was, if it is not now, excellent, priceless, beyond all praise or blame; whereas anything native, or even occidental, was more or less worthless or inconsiderable—even such things as the Andes and Amazon, as contrasted with the Alps and the Nile; Brazil and Argentina, Mexico and the Canadian snows were as nothing compared to Belgium or Turkey, the Riviera, Asia, Africa. One cannot help smiling a little at times at the grand manner with which the only moderately equipped foreigner, intellectually or otherwise, has been permitted to walk abroad in America and either sniff at or patronize all with which he comes in contact as though it were nothing. And the pathetic desire of the American to live up to what foreigners expected of him—even the waiters of France or the middle class of gentry of England. And as for the English lord, the French or Italian count, the Austrian or even German baron, the Spanish grandee, the Russian prince or Turkish pasha—it is folly to deny that he was—may be even yet, for all one knows—overcome by his attentions. To the American they were inherently better, in some strange sense, more versed in the ways of that great world which he longed to explore. Let a restaurant advertise a French cuisine or cook; a tailor say he is English; a beauty-parlor or dressmaker that it or she or he is of Paris; a writer or artist that he is of French, Russian, Italian, English extraction—creak goes the American knee and instanter your native American is down on his marrowbones, his eyes rolled heavenward. Of Paris! Of London! Of Rome! Of St. Petersburg! Of Vienna! Ah! How many American fortunes

have been rebanked in Europe to the order of the thinnest of noble pretensions! What millions have not been expended in an all but useless effort to take on the color and surface veneer of European manners and culture! To this day a foreign make of car, watch, cloth, is inherently better than that of any American manufacture. Formerly foreign plays practically excluded the American product—and rightly enough, in my judgment. We have been "raised" on the foreign book, the foreign picture, the foreign object of art. The Swiss, French or Austrian Alps—how for a hundred years at least have they not outrivaled everything America has to offer!

And well enough, perhaps, since as yet America has no intellectual atmosphere, no native art force wherewith to present its claims, even to itself. A drab, and in places narrowly ignorant, people, imagining that it is religious, moral, conservative—a thousand things that really it is not. Since it is mental capacity that makes a country interesting to itself and others, perhaps it is the drab attitude of the American toward what he has and is which makes his land so uninteresting to himself and others. Give him a different mental attitude, more perspective, "punch," daring in regard to life itself, and America would soon take on a luster not outrivaled by that of any other land.

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Let us contemplate in this connection another and, in so far as this essay is concerned, final phase of the American mind—for I have elsewhere dealt with moral narrowness—and that is his serious and, were it not so pathetic and at times tragic, one might say, amusing, faith in the ballot and what it will or can

accomplish for him. Always, always he is voting for someone—a mayor or a State legislator every year; a congressman every two years, a senator every four or six; a governor every two and a President every four years—and he is under the illusion that thereby, by his vote, his choice of a candidate, he is running the Government and maintaining his so-called liberties. The futility of his vote in the late great war might have taught him something, if only he were to be taught. To this day he has not discovered that, in the main, he is merely voting for individuals thrust upon him by interests and forces over which he has no control, never has had, and apparently never can have,. and the election or defeat of whom does not depend upon him or the individuals about whom he is so excited. Mayors, governors, state legislators, congressmen, senators, and even judges and presidents, come and go, but the powerful interests at the top remain; and however much the former may be imbued with a desire to do something for the rank and file, the latter are there to revise or repress their emotions or opinions, and the ordinary voter finds himself about where he was before—of small force or weight in the vast welter of American politics. In short, keen money-masters at the top long since learned that a bare majority of votes anywhere, in or out of congress or a state legislature, is sufficient to confer rule and that, apart from convincing the intellect by sound argument, there were many, many ways of bending the representatives of the people to their will. If this is not true, how is it that five per cent of them have ninety-five per cent of the wealth and the other ninety-five only five?

Those who have made a study of the history

of the American judiciary have stood in amaze before the evidence that non-elective branches of the Government could so consistently, so openly and so contemptuously undo the work of the elective branches (The Dred Scott decision; the first nullification of the income tax; to cite only two). In what American city would an outside corporation desiring real facilities or privileges not deem itself lunatic not to see the individual local boss, who holds no office of any kind but who is nevertheless the last authority and can tell the local mayor and the local council, often the local governor, what and how? And to whom does the local boss bow—the local governor or national president? Not at all. He makes them, or helps. He bows to but one force: money, the great national monied interests, and none other. It is only when the financial powers at the top fall out among themselves that the least of benefits accrue to the people. It is always so, and has always been so. Equation—equation. The monied individual against the mass; the mass against the monied individual.

In what American city or state, pray, would a popular vote for any franchise or improvement, however needful, be of any avail unless the consent of the financial oligarchs at the top (in Wall Street principally) were first obtained? So much is this a commonplace that even the voters themselves would laugh at the suggestion of any power lying in them to obtain any such thing. Before the Government temporarily took over the railroads during the period of the great war, Lucius Tuttle (a mere single illustration, this), president of the Boston & Maine Railroad, controlled the political life of Maine, New Hampshire and Vermont and lifted up or cast down, at his personal

whim, members of legislatures, governors, and United States senators. This is a matter of record, not of rumor. The quondam Senator Chandler of New Hampshire, one of the foremost senators of the nation of his day, was thrown out of office on orders from Mr. Tuttle for the most inconsequential exhibition of independence. And Mr. Tuttle took his orders from Charles S. Mellen, president of the New York, New Haven & Hartford Railroad; Mr. Mellen took his orders from J. Pierpont Morgan, the elder, financial master of Wall Street. And Mr. Morgan took his orders—from whom? God?

Is it not a commonplace of fact, recorded in every newspaper file in America as well as every history worthy the name, that the Goulds, Hills, Harrimans, Rockefellers, Vanderbilts and such great banking houses as Kuhn, Loeb & Company, absolutely ruled—via agents, attorneys, lobbyists, paid legislators, governors and the like—the politics of the states through which their roads passed? The little minnow voters running here and there in schools might amuse themselves as they would by voting for this, that or the other unimportant thing—a mayor, say, or a governor or a president—but let any vital question appear, something affecting the purse or privileges of the money-lords, and the votes of the voters were cast out or miscounted, their elected representatives suborned and made false to their oaths and pledges, the judiciary ruled as the money interests dictated, the newspapers made to cloud the issue with specious or false arguments, and even presidents and parties faced about, leaving the dreaming, ambitious, hopeful voter to dream on or to seek his so-called constitutional rights in some other vain or ridicu-

lous way. Money has always ruled America, and apparently always will. As well ask five cents to contend with five billion dollars as to ask an ordinary voter or business man of minor import to maintain or obtain his so-called rights, privileges, hopes, dreams via the ballot, or any other way. Even decent consideration for him or his affairs from those above him financially has not in the main been granted. He has been whipped and harried by the very rich as they chose; and still, because he has the ballot and can go to the polls every once in so often and cast it—and at such times as he is not whimpering over his defeats—he imagines he rules!

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The truth is that America has not as yet had an intelligence or a culture worthy the name. It has no visible intellectual purpose, unless it be that of getting money. What little so-called culture we have had, if we have had any, has been borrowed from abroad—principally England, which itself has needed to be revivified along the lines of true culture; for it, too, as to its written and spoken professions at least, has become puritan, pharisaic, religious and never has been democratic. If you want to see America illustrated rather clearly as to its cultural, or lack of cultural, results contemplate the American millionaire. He had, if he has not now, the prevailing idea that money is power; he worshiped and slaved for it in the hope that it would make him wonderful in the eyes of all men.

But consider the pathetic result. He got it. A great war crisis arrived. He wished to be useful with his great (and purely imaginary) power, to do some significant thing which

would help the world or at least his country in its hour of stress. Had he the mental or spiritual equipment to see or even feel what was needed? Or was he but one of that immense class of American men and women who discovered in this crisis that business somehow failed to fulfill their spiritual needs and reached out from it, only to find themselves lost in a maze of wider relationships for which they had no technique? Ford organized a peace ship! He, with a little load of editors, journalists, preachers and what not, going to Europe to "call the men out of the trenches by Christmas!" (1915). And the wise American papers, especially in our Middle and Far West, full of his praises, and the probability of success! It could be done! And that, in the face of an amazing and subtle racial movement and propaganda, with war and conquest as its under-stones, organizing in Germany since the year 1813. The rest contented themselves with making more money. So much for one American business giant's success, and his intellectual grasp on life!

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Take yet another phase in conclusion. At the beginning of the great world war we were constantly hearing talk of "the obligations laid upon us," "our duty to civilization," the necessity for "making the world safe for democracy," when, as a matter of fact and according to our chief spokesman's own admission it was not until between the third and fourth year of the war that we began to realize the true program or purpose of the enemy and that some such enthusiasm as was at first called for might be necessary! We talked of the time having come for us "to play our part among the societies of

the world"—and then sent a Root and a Francis (corporation lawyers and agents both, and long since discredited by the American people themselves) to argue with the representatives of a torn and war-worn people seeking a new and better form of social and political life. In the war itself it was apparently assumed that "men, money and ships" (the old American idea of quantity, you see, not ideas or wits wherewith to match the deepest schemes of our adversaries as well as our friends) was the point. But life or international politics and relations or diplomacy is something more than that. It may, and did, require nothing less than a mobilization of new characteristics and unique forces on the part of the pacifistic and religious-minded American. It actually compelled him to open his brains to the fact that life is more dark and mysterious than he had supposed, more forceful and terrible and cruel than his petty little pacifistic and puritanic dreams would previously have permitted him to believe. A door was unlocked, a window opened, and looking out or in on the deeps of Nature he saw—dimly enough even then, it must be admitted—what he has not even yet digested; that Nature has no strict and God-given rules, that nothing is really fixed; anything may arise, and that within the bounds of an unknown arc of equation anything may happen—anything.

But it took a world horror to crack the armor of smug, ignorant self-sufficiency which has covered the average American from crown to sole.

And has he learned? Does life really mean any more to him than it did before? I wonder. As some one else has brilliantly said:

"The fierce, rudimentary mass mind of Amer-

ica, like that of some inchoate, primeval monster, relentlessly concentrated in the appetite of the moment, knows nothing as yet apparently of its own vast, inert, almost nerveless body encrusted with parasites. One looks out today over the immense vista of our society, stretching westward in a succession of dreary steppes, and one realizes what it means to possess no cultural initiative or tradition, filling in the interstices of energy and maintaining a steady current of life over and above the ebb and flow of individual necessity or animal appetite or purpose." Money, money, money. To build, build, build, in order to make more money, to make a show, to be better than thou—financially only. It is told of the quondam Russell Sage that he kept near him in his office a strongbox containing $78,000,000 in what he called "gilt-edge" securities, the which, whenever he wished to prove how wonderful he was and how great his life had been, he brought forth and exclaimed: "There—there isn't a man in America who can show that many first-class stocks and bonds! Not one!"

And there wasn't, perhaps.

But what of it?

He died, and not knowing what to do with it (splendid testimony to the American financial intellect), left it all to his wife; who, old and ignorant herself and not knowing what to do with it, but fearing its senseless distribution, left it, after various benefactions to sectarian schools and much influence brought to bear, to the Russell Sage Foundation. And the Russell Sage Foundation, not knowing exactly what to do with it, has been "investigating," and re-investigating re-re-investigating ever since, this, that and the other, with a view to finding

out what it should do with it, what one thing, if any, to help. And what great thing, if any, has the Russell Sage Foundation done?

Well, America, in its own peculiar and interesting way, may find itself intellectually. As an old char-woman, who worked for me remarked, "I'm not so dumb than I look." So possibly and probably, America.

To be sure, a new country must at first borrow its culture from somewhere. One does not come by such a thing instanter and out of a silk hat. Still here is a nation now three hundred years old; it has one hundred and twenty millions of people, if not more; it has as great, and in their way forceful, cities as exist anywhere on the globe; its architecture is already most imposing and fast attaining a splendor hitherto never equaled by any land; a far better and more satisfying mechanical equipment is here than in any nation elsewhere. We have in so far as material facilities are concerned, more and better opportunities for genuine culture, than are now available to the mass anywhere. Then, why are we so bent, I should like to know, upon more money, and, when not that, upon idealistically misinterpreting life? The few genuine thinkers that America has thus far produced are taboo: Poe, Whitman, Twain. Only in one field, finance—not in war, politics, the arts and sheer intellect—do our essential individuals compare favorably with those of other lands. In the main we are too idealistic or illusioned in all but our material affairs. But why all the delusion *in re* the ordinary intellectual facts of life? No single nation has more of wealth, courage, industry, or more impressive varieties of scenery, be it of mountains, lakes, valleys, the coast. We

should be, and for all I know are (although the signs are not numerous), at the opening of an era of art and letters such as the world in none of its great periods has surpassed. Yet in spite of all this, and in so far as the mass and its ostensible leaders are concerned, we are intellectually dull and unperceiving in regard to all the basic facts of life. All men are still honest, kind and true (or should be) in America; all women pure as driven snow (or should be) in America. The Sermon on the Mount is our real Constitution; the Ten Commandments our only laws. We all do justly, think kindly, and it is only bad men from the world without, strangers and evil-thinkers, who come from heaven knows where—for our intellectual and spiritual cosmogony does not admit them—to cause us trouble.

America in its own good time may come to a great end. And again it may not. It may be —who knows?—a mere money machine, a honey-gatherer like the bee, a material welter like Rome, without the slightest vision as to what to do or how to act once it has its great store. Other and shrewder nations, far less able financially or physically, may yet lead the giant by the hand, pull him around by the nose. He may be psychologically the same as the wealthy heir to whom life's pains and doubts are and remain unknown, who, being pulled in upon expensive pleasures or the ventures of others and given a superficial reason, is cheerfully willing to pay the bill and depart.

Well, if so be, so be. Who can help it? Nature, if not man, has a way, however, if not wisdom. In the course of time She disposes of nations and their dreams, as well as man and his, by rotting them and their material splendors back into primal chemical substances and

forces and forgetting them. Rome has gone; Greece has gone; and many, many another. But speaking for a nation that wishes to stand forth mentally significant among the peoples of the earth, that wishes to lead or at least be among those that lead, must not thought—intelligent, artistic, accurate vision—be among its primary characteristics? And is it not possible that as with individuals so with nations—where the power to think is lacking failure follows? Sometimes, and in view of the careers of various nations past and still present, one is hounded by the thought that as with individuals so with nations; some are born fools, live fools, and die fools. And may not America perchance be one such?

One hopes not.

But——

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